

THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus*.

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke*.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

REPRISALS.

John Evelyn, the diarist, under the date 13th July, 1694, makes this significant entry :

‘ Lord Berkeley burnt Dieppe and Havre-de-Grace with bombs, in revenge for the defeat at Brest. This manner of destructive war was begun by the French, is exceedingly ruinous, especially falling on the poorer people, and does not seem to tend to make a more speedy end of the war, but rather to exasperate and incite to revenge.’

In this entry, Evelyn evinces insight and humanity. *Blitz-Krieg* bombing in Britain to-day has aroused similar feelings of exasperation and revenge, and has led to a vigorous and widespread demand that as the Germans are doing to us, so should we do to them. But should we?

In Charles Kingsley’s *Water Babies*, a certain ‘ Mrs. Be-donebyasyoudid ’ plays a prominent part in Tom’s early education. At a later stage, when Thomas learned his lesson, this stern mentor is transformed into the very charming and delightful ‘ Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby.’ In this parable, or more correctly, allegory, the Victorian moralist inculcates the lesson that human education must begin by placing its pupil under the reign of law before introducing him into the Kingdom of Grace. St. Paul emphasized this educational order in the history of Israel’s religion. Charles Kingsley beheld it operating in the wider world of human experience. This, he was convinced, was

the Divine method of education. These two, Law and Grace, were not in contradiction but in succession: Law first, then Grace.

‘An awefulness behind the Law

A sweetness following on the awe.’

To-day, in religious circles, there is much discussion about the rightfulness of reprisals. The principle of reprisals, or the *lex talionis*, belongs to the legal stage of human education. It is based essentially on the idea of justice. In primitive society, it is ‘rough justice.’ In the more developed forms of society, such as we have satirized in Gilbert’s *Mikado*, justice becomes more scientific in its endeavour to make ‘the punishment fit the crime.’ The point to be grasped and held fast is this: that the *lex talionis* is essentially moral. It is inspired by the sense of justice and it aims at the practice of justice. The most superficial examination makes this self-evident. What, however, is not so easily perceived is that the *lex talionis* is also essentially humane. The *lex talionis* in the form, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, occurs in the three chief legal codes of Israel, and its purpose there is plainly, to restrict the impulse of lawless revenge by making it yield to the principle of justice. The natural man demands at least two eyes for the one he has lost and probably five teeth for the incisor of which he has been deprived. But the Jewish legislation, in obedience to the principle of justice, reinforced by considerations of humanity, will not allow him to go beyond an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth.

Jesus Christ introduced another basic principle into human conduct, that of love. Does this mean that in the sphere of human conduct love is to replace the principle of justice?

The answer to that question will depend upon how the principle of love is interpreted. If love be defined as giving to each, as far as it is within our power, that which is best for him, there will be no conflict between love and justice. For experience shows that, as a general rule, to give to the natural man what is due to him is to give to him what is best for him. When the natural man has entered into the Kingdom of Grace and been transformed into the spiritual man, and has learnt to do as he would be done by, the principle of justice will continue to be

fulfilled in the form of reciprocal treatment, but on a higher level. Thus, although acting in accordance with the principle of justice we may never give to any man what is less than due to him, yet the co-operative principle of love will inspire us, in cases where it is good for the recipient, to give him more than justice demands.

When we are faced by the practical problems of whether Christian England ought to inflict reprisals on Germany for her campaign of terrorist, ruthless, indiscriminate bombing of women and children and non-combatants, two points are clear. The first is that in their own interest, and in the interest of human welfare and progress generally, the Germans must be taught that their methods of barbarous warfare do not pay. Is their teacher to be Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid or Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby? From what we know of the German record, the only effective teacher for them in the present juncture is Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid. When she has done her painful work, we hope that she will be usefully followed by Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby.

The second point is this. Because the Germans act like brutes and barbarians, we who are Christian and civilized Englishmen are not justified in acting in the same way. We cannot stoop to use terrorist methods and the indiscriminate slaughter of women and children. Are we not, then, between the horns of a dilemma?

There is, however, a *tertium quid*. We have discovered that there is a more excellent way of teaching the Germans that barbaric, indiscriminate bombing does not pay, and that is, not by using against them the same brutal methods that they use against us. This third method is to paralyse their war machine by using our air arm to strike with pitiless repercussion at the nerve centres of the German war machine.

As this process proceeds, Germany will find increasing opportunity for penitential reflection, and will come in the end to realize not only that might is not right, but also that ultimately barbarism must always be defeated by the methods of civilization: and by civilization, we mean a form of human society which is progressively realizing Christian ideals in its character and conduct.

PRAISE AND DISPRAISE.

Dr. Wilson, the Bishop of Chelmsford, in the *Chelmsford Diocesan Chronicle* for September, condemns the use of *Songs of Praise* in the churches of his Diocese. He writes :

‘I feel it is my duty to say that I disapprove of this book, and I hope its introduction into the Churches in this Diocese will cease.’

‘Some months ago I made some brief criticism of a certain hymn-book which I meet all too often in our churches . . . the more I see of *Songs of Praise* the less I like it as a hymn-book. Someone has said that “if a man were permitted to make the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation.” I may paraphrase this and say that hymns play a larger part in the making of popular religion than theological formulæ. We cannot, therefore, be too careful in the choice of our hymns. Regular churchgoers unconsciously learn them by heart and the doctrine taught in the hymns, by the process of suggestion, is assimilated into the mind.’

The Bishop is right about the influence of hymns in the propagation of religious doctrine. It was this truth which made Bishop Westcott wring his hands as he studied the theology of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Dr. Dearmer held similar convictions, and that was one reason why he brought *Songs of Praise* into existence. He desired passionately, in the interests of Christian truth, to improve the theology of our Church’s hymnology. This was no easy task to accomplish, for a number of fine popular hymns were rendered theologically objectionable by only a few lines or phrases. In some cases the remedy could be effected by a simple excision. A good example of this operation, to which the Bishop of Chelmsford takes strong exception, is found in Mrs. Alexander’s children’s hymn, ‘There is a green hill far away.’ The verse,

‘There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin,
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven and let us in.’

certainly teaches a discarded theory of the Atonement which, in its extreme form, represented ‘the price of sin’ being paid to the devil. To our mind the hymn is improved in every way by this excision, and by it no wrong is done to the doctrine of the Atonement strongly expressed in the remaining verses.

In other cases Dr. Dearmer has attempted the more difficult and dangerous task of re-writing the offending lines, for example :

‘Draw nigh and take the Body of the Lord,
And drink the Holy Blood for you outpour’d.’

becomes

‘Draw nigh and take the Body of the Lord,
And drink the life and grace for you outpour’d.’

We confess that we do not like altering what the author has written, but it is a choice of evils; nevertheless it is treating the author with more respect to re-write a line of his hymn than to reject his hymn altogether. There is, we fear, no hope of reconciliation. Bishop Wilson is championing the cause of a reactionary Evangelicalism. Dr. Dearmer demanded a modern Christian theology.

The ‘Blood-Theology’ was utterly abhorrent to Dr. Dearmer, not simply because it propagated a barbarous and repulsive view of Christ’s sacrifice, but also because it misrepresented the true nature of the Divine Father and so became detrimental to Christian morality. Dr. Dearmer felt that the right influence of the Christian religion in the modern world demanded the elimination of such falsities and crudities from books of Christian worship, and so he did his best to achieve this in *Songs of Praise*.

He had also another objection to much traditional hymnology. The music was very poor. John Wesley was resolved that ‘the devil should not have all the best tunes,’ and Dr. Dearmer was of the same mind. Taken as a whole, the music of *Songs of Praise* was much in advance of any of the hymn-books in common use which had preceded it. That perhaps is one reason why in schools and colleges and in assemblies of young men and women of the educated classes this book which, as the Bishop plaintively remarks, ‘I meet all too often,’ is steadily making its way.

Dr. Dearmer would have been the last man to have regarded his work as above criticism or as incapable of improvement. All he would have asked for it, is what Milton asked for the Truth: ‘Let it have room.’

SECULARISM, SECTARIANISM AND EPISCOPACY.

Dr. Perowne, Bishop of Worcester, in a recent address to his Diocesan Conference, asserted—quoting Mr. R. B. Henderson—that nearly the whole of England had gone pagan educationally. Stress should be laid on the word *educationally*, because *practically* England was never more Christian than she is to-day. Dr. Perowne believes that our educational paganism

is in no small degree due to our Christian sectarianism, and that our Christian sectarianism is mainly due to the unhistorical and un-Christian claims made for Episcopacy—claims which Dr. Perowne rightly points out have not the support of such great English Churchmen and scholars as Bishop Lightfoot, Bishop Westcott and Bishop Headlam. The *Church Times* is deeply pained, and believes, if the exclusive claims of Episcopacy be sacrificed, our Christian Orthodoxy, our Catholic Sacramentalism, and indeed everything which makes Christianity worth while and significant, must also go by the board. This is an oft-repeated tale, but in these days of advertisement, we realize the psychological value of repetition in the interests of propaganda. In its issue (July 26) commenting on Dr. Perowne's pronouncement, the Editor writes :

'The Bishop of Worcester is, we fear, a lamentable example of the Churchman who adopts a defeatist attitude towards Churchmanship. In his *Diocesan Leaflet* he criticizes the "one-sided view of episcopacy" which blocks the path of organic Christian unity in this country, and thus prevents the concession of true Christian education in the schools. He claims that the obstacle is not any difference of the Faith held, but only this naughty obstinacy about the episcopal order. In a sense, we agree with him. If Churchmen discarded some of their convictions, there would be nothing left to separate them from Dissenters. Let them disbelieve yet more, and they could get reunion with atheists.'

We knew a curate who preached a sermon on the text *John* iv, 23 : 'the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth : for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.' When he had concluded his sermon, his indignant and heart-broken vicar remarked : 'Would you believe it, he has swept away all the distinctions between ourselves and the Dissenters !'

In his endeavours in the interest of Christian fellowship, and as a preliminary to an educational movement which is to re-Christianize the English people, the Bishop of Worcester is engaged in a similar undertaking, and the vast majority of English people will feel that morally and spiritually the nation has much to gain, and nothing to lose, by such an enterprise. We hope that Dr. Perowne will secure much public and practical support from his fellow-bishops in his endeavour, for we are sure that there are many of them who share his convictions, and ardently desire a Christian system of education in the schools of the nation in which all middle walls of partition between

Churchmen and Dissenters are swept away. What we need, first and foremost, as Dr. Fisher, Bishop of London, has recently pointed out, is the inculcation of Christian values in our schools, and these values, as he also points out, must find their basis in Christian doctrine, and, we may add, their convincing proof in Christian character and conduct; but episcopal claims do not come in that class.

We support no root and branch policy for the extirpation of Prelacy. A benign, judicious, constitutional, historic Episcopate in this land has considerable value for Christian leadership and administration. But the sure road to the discrediting and even the abolition of Episcopacy is to take the line of the *Church Times*. The best argument for Episcopacy is a good bishop, and there is none other that will carry any weight to-day in England.

IN MEMORIAM VERNON FAITHFULL STORR

THE death of Vernon Faithfull Storr on October 25, 1940, following so quickly on the death of Canon Pat McCormick, deprives the metropolitan clergy of two of their most influential members, both widely esteemed and greatly beloved, though differing markedly in their gifts and activities.

Pat McCormick was pre-eminently a stimulating and sympathetic popular preacher and social worker. Vernon Storr was a theological scholar and clerical educationist. Both were Liberals in their religious thinking and in their practical churchmanship.

The seeds of Liberal Churchmanship were sown for Vernon Storr in his schoolboy days at Clifton College under the second of its great Liberal Headmasters, J. M. Wilson. After his First Class in 'Greats' at Queen's College, Oxford, he became a Fellow of University College. His bent was towards philosophical theology and exhibited itself in his first published volume, *Development and Divine Purpose*. This, in due course, was followed by *The Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century, 1800—1860* (1913), the most valuable of his many contributions to theological literature. It was a matter of regret to not a few that he did not continue this account of English theological development into a second or even a third

volume. His academic life was followed by a period of pastoral life in quiet rural parishes, Haslemere, Bramshott and Bentley, where he was much esteemed as a pastor and friend. This rustic period was succeeded by life in Cathedral Closes, first at Winchester, then at Westminster. From Westminster he might have ascended an episcopal throne, but he wisely decided to devote himself instead to the education of the clergy.

A great Liberal Churchman of wide culture and even wider sympathies, to whom religious bigotry, obscurantism and fanaticism were as personally painful as they were intensely un-Christian, he recognized that education, theological and devotional, was the sole cure for those evils in our Church life. He therefore set himself to carry out this difficult task and few could have been better fitted than he to accomplish it. Possessed of gentle ways, attractive personality, patient tact, wisdom and discernment, and not least of all, sound learning, he achieved a success which more than justified his devoted service.

Many years ago, Canon Storr became a member of the Modern Churchmen's Union and was one of its Vice-Presidents at the time of his death. His practical sapience, however, led him to realize that the activities of that society in the cause of Liberal Churchmanship needed to be supplemented by at least another organization. The Modern Churchmen's Union was certainly serving the needs of liberally-minded English clergy and laity, but it was exerting no influence at all in the religious education of the great bulk of the Evangelical clergy. It was clear to Vernon Storr that an urgent work remained to be carried out in this sphere, and so he deliberately set himself to do it, and in the most judicious way. He joined the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement, whose largely-attended conferences at Cromer and elsewhere, with their happy blending of theological education, missionary enthusiasm and simple devotional atmosphere, provided periods of real enlightenment and refreshment for Evangelical parochial clergymen grievously in need of both. As its President and the leader of its conferences his influence was profound. Although the Standard-bearer has fallen, we hope that others will be found to carry on, in his spirit and by his methods, his great work in these darkening days of religious timidity and theological reaction. H.D.A.M.

RELIGION AND EDUCATION *

By R. B. HENDERSON, M.A., B.D., Reader in Religious Education in the University of Oxford.

INAUGURAL lectures are not given by readers — such pomp and circumstance are happily and rightly reserved for professors. Nevertheless, even readers must begin somewhere — they must at some time deliver a first lecture, and I can assure you that it is an occasion looked forward to with some knocking together of feeble knees by the protagonist himself. In one respect I am better placed than most readers in a similar position. One fear I am spared — no one can compare my performance with that of others in the past who might have delivered far more weighty discourses, sparkling with brilliant wit, illuminating all the dark corners of their subjects, and holding their audiences spellbound with magic oratory — for there have been no predecessors witty or dull, illuminating or darkening, poetic or prosaic. There have been none — for I am the first. Yet this is cold comfort : I am certainly the first Manchester Reader, but I am confronted with a further terror — I may be the last, the Alpha and the Omega.

I am like to resemble the humble mule who, it is said, has neither pride of ancestry nor hope of posterity. No, let us hope that I am the Alpha, but not the Omega — there is plenty of work to be done by the other letters of the Greek alphabet. And in the meantime, at least you have the five years vouchsafed by the generosity of Manchester College. You will notice that I said 'You,' not 'I.' I may be removed by the hand of God — or the Vice-Chancellor — or even by a badly-aimed bomb, a messenger from Satan, but the Readership is assured for five years at least.

Education, treated as a subject for discussion, is not like Euclidean Geometry, where one begins with definitions, axioms, and postulates alleged to be self-evident, and builds up a vast

* The substance of the opening lecture in the Readership in Religious Education delivered at Manchester College, Oxford, in Michaelmas Term, 1940.

structure on their foundation. It is more like philosophy where the definition comes at the end of the course rather than at the beginning, and is often never reached at all. We are dealing with Life, and if Life is not endless, at least we may say that its end is hidden from us. We may also say that 'the end is not yet.' But although the end may be lost in the mists that lie ahead it may be possible to guess at some of the meaning of Life, though we must expect in the course of our wanderings to find ourselves often confronted with insuperable obstacles.

We shall propound propositions for consideration rather than give utterance to pontifical pronouncements. This must, however, not be taken to mean that we shall be content with vague, hazy, opinions lightly held. Far from it—there will be little room for the Laodicean; some of our convictions we must be prepared to defend to the utmost, if need be to the stake, or, which is far worse, the concentration camp. But we must know just what these essentials are. One of our great difficulties is to distinguish between the eternal truths for which noble men are willing to die, and the ephemeral half-truths about which ignoble men perpetually wrangle.

We must formulate our beliefs, but the worst—or is it the best?—of it is that the moment we have done so we want to follow up the formularies with hosts of explanations. In dealing with religion, it is wise to admit nothing without making sure of the use to which the admission is to be put.

Consider a few propositions such as :

- (1) Religious instruction should form an integral part of every school curriculum.
- (2) In an ideal system of education, there would be a chapel in every school and college.
- (3) Every subject of human learning is a branch of Theology—knowledge of God.
- (4) Every subject should be taught by an expert in that subject.
- (5) Religion is caught, rather than taught.
- (6) Ethics is not quite the same thing as religion, and the teaching of ethics cannot take the place of religious education.

Now it would be quite possible to start off with any one or more of these propositions, regarded as self-evident, and see what could be deduced. This would be fatal. For one thing they are not self-evident, and if we pretended that they were,

we should leave behind us at the very beginning of our expedition a good many people whose company for the whole journey is very much desired. They are rather conclusions which we may eventually reach, or perhaps it would be wiser to say, towards which we may find ourselves moving. It is only by such a slow approach that these goals will be worth the attainment. In other words, our hope is to acquire merit by the pilgrimage even if we never succeed in reaching our Mecca.

We must, however, be reasonably sure that the pilgrimage is worth undertaking, and it might be an advantage to know that Mecca exists even though we may fail to reach it.

What we have to show, therefore, is that Religious Education is something desirable in itself, and, supposing that we succeed in doing so, we must then go on to see how this desirable thing can be obtained.

We meet with difficulties straight away. What is Education? and What is Religion? People most certainly mean different things by the words—widely and fundamentally different. So great are the differences that any attempt at harmonization is foredoomed to failure, and it shall not be attempted. In these circumstances the best, indeed the only possible rule, is each for himself. I will give my own definitions of the terms, and if anyone can think of better ones let him press forward with them at all costs. I define Education as the training of the whole man, body, soul and spirit, for an ever-increasing service to God and man, and I define Religion as the correct relationship between man and God. Now I am well aware that both these definitions can be reduced to something dangerously near to tautology. That is the way of definitions, and it is for that reason that they come last and not first in philosophical investigation. It would perhaps be better to say that before the investigations begin, our definitions are void—forms without content—and it is the object of the investigation to fill the forms with substance. At all events that will be our object in these lectures.

It amounts to this, then—we shall have a good deal to say about God and man—man as body, soul and spirit—and how best man can be trained in a Godward sense. This will take us a good deal further afield than might have been thought likely when we introduced the word *Education*. We shall have some-

thing to say about schools and universities — as they are and as they might be — but we shall be led to think of all life as school-time; and what we have to say will therefore be of interest to those who have no intention of becoming schoolmasters. At least, that is my fervent hope. Our message is not exactly to the man in the street, but it is certainly directed to the men in the colleges. For we must make up our minds what to teach before we determine how to teach it, and the substance of our Religious Faith is a matter which concerns us all. Its interest is not confined to the schoolmaster.

Vast changes have taken place in Europe since the collapse of the Roman Empire and the Roman Church — so vast that even the Reformation itself is but an incident of the revolution which has taken place. Copernicus has changed the universe for us: it has taken hundreds of years to work out all the implications of the abandonment of the three-storied universe of the ancients, and the task is by no means yet completed. We are, even now, only just beginning to feel at home in our new and extensive playground. It is certainly extensive. One hundred thousand million stars go to make our own galaxy, and there are one hundred thousand million galaxies in the universe. Need this daunt us? No — for if the creation of a universe of these staggering dimensions is wonderful enough, it is even more wonderful that the Creator should have made man who can make it all part of his study. Size is not everything; strange as it seems at first sight, size is nothing compared with beauty or truth or goodness. These — beauty, truth and goodness — must be followed wherever they lead. It is their pursuit that has led man to the discovery of his vast playground.

Theology is the Queen of Sciences. All knowledge is knowledge of God. The theologian therefore should be the most receptive of men. It is his business to take stock of all the discoveries made by man, in whatever field they are made, and to fit them into his scheme of things. The theologian is, as it were, a builder who is intent on the making of a great palace fit for heroes to live in. He thought that he knew pretty well what was in the mind of the Architect, and he seemed to be getting on nicely with his job till he found that the sub-contractors began to bring in materials that simply could not be made

to fit in with the plan to which he was working. In spite of his protests, more and more of this new stuff came pouring in until it became clear that if any building were to be made, much of the old would have to be pulled down. The builder's protests now became more violent and he appealed again and again to the Architect, but all to no avail. It now seems that the plan in the builder's hands was not the work of the Architect after all. The builder thought he was making a palace and it turns out that, if he had had his way, a block of slum dwellings would have been the result.

Of recent years, there has been a great slum clearance in the theological world, but as so often happens in this country (and perhaps in others too), we have pulled a great deal down and built very little up. People ought not to live in slums, but neither ought they to wander homeless over the countryside, and there has been a great deal of wandering of late.

The position is very bad — it is almost desperate. Something must be done quickly. A beginning must be made somewhere, and what more suitable place could be found than Oxford? If Oxford is the home of lost causes, it is also, let it be remembered, the place where new movements rise.

We have had a generation and more of secularism — I had nearly said secular education, but that is a contradiction in terms and you cannot have it even if you want it — a generation of secularism. Such theology as has been taught in the Schools has been mainly pre-Copernican, or at least tainted with pre-Copernicanism, and the result to-day is Pagan Schools and Pagan Universities.

This is an exaggeration — thank God — and it does grave injustice to many noble workers in many schools and some universities. It is an exaggeration, but it is much too near the truth for our comfort and for our reputation.

But some will say — why bother about Theology or Religion? Is not the Christian Ethic what is required, and is not that being taught in every decent school and in every decent home in the land? An insidious danger lurks here, and we may well spend a few moments in exposing it. To begin with, what *is* the Christian Ethic? does it differ much from the Stoic? Did Christianity to some extent borrow from the Stoic? Is Christianity compatible

with Capitalism or does it favour Communism? May a Christian bear arms and help to slay Germans? In other words, was Jesus a Communist or a Pacifist, or did he again, as some think, advise withdrawal from the world of strife, or did he suggest that we should lead a double life, loyal to both God and to Mammon, Caesar and God each in their separate spheres? I have heard all these questions answered in the affirmative, and yet all the answers cannot be true. No, let us face the facts; it is not certain what the Christian Ethic really means. People interpret passages differently: the exact determination of Christian Ethics is a matter for scholars, and scholars are not agreed and are never likely to be. Still, there is a fairly large body of Christian Ethic—though it may well be doubted if it *be* specially Christian, nor does it matter much whether it be or no—there is an Ethic which could be taught. But how much good would this do? Not very much. We want the *word*—true—but we only really want it if it comes with *Power*. It is power we want; people are tired of good advice, they even resent it. Good example is better—but not necessarily compelling.

The promulgation of the Law may, at times, be a necessity. It may be *life-saving*—it will never be *life-giving*. And a Law means sanctions, and the mediaeval sanctions of Heaven and Hell have lost all their efficacy. It is not the severity so much as the certainty of punishment that deters. Hell is severe enough, but unfortunately no one believes in its probability, let alone certainty.

Furthermore, even if we could return to the Middle Ages with their pathetic belief in rewards and punishments, should we be any better off? I don't think so. 'Doth Job serve God for nought?' was a very fair question for Satan to ask. If honesty is the best policy, where is the merit in being honest? It comes to this then—Law without sanction is powerless, and Law *with* sanction ensures no merit for obedience. Where is the way out of this difficulty? Without Theology, I do not see any way. We may either say with the crudest of hedonists, 'Let us eat, drink and be as merry as we can, for to-morrow we die,' or we must seek a sanction for morality in some outside human institution such as a totalitarian state or a totalitarian Church, both merely forms of idolatry. But if we bring in Theology to

our aid, the difficulty disappears. There is a God who *cares* for us and his ideas about us regarding a destiny which will use all the powers with which he has endowed us. If we believe *this* and this God wants us to share his care, *then* we may say with the soldier, 'Let me, O Lord, fight and not heed the wounds, work and seek for no reward save the knowledge that I do Thy Will.'

If there be any other sanction for Ethics — Christian or non-Christian — I am not aware of it. Therefore it is impossible to teach Ethics except on a Theological basis. Without such a basis we are powerless before the retort of the evil-doer who says, 'I don't want to be good, I don't like your goodness, I prefer to be selfish, and if I am punished for it now or afterwards that is my affair and I'll take my punishment like a man.' Convince him, if you can, that no evil can befall a good man either in this life or in any other, and he will perhaps cease to talk foolishness; but I know of no method by which I am likely to convince him if I may not bring God into the argument at some stage or another.

If it is objected that I am hereby introducing something mysterious and doubtful, I am quite content to allow the objection to lie. There is no apodictic certainty about God; Life itself is mysterious and doubtful — mysterious and doubtful at every point. It seems indeed that doubt actually increases with the interest and importance of the subject. The simpler and less important a matter is, the less is the doubt about it. But the difficulty in believing in God is just negligible compared with the difficulty of not believing in him.

And remember God is either nowhere or he is everywhere, and if he is everywhere then it follows that to frame any system of education without God is the most foolish and dangerous thing that any civilized society could do. It is just what the Germans *have* done — with appalling results to themselves and to everyone else. If England is better, I am not sure that much credit is due to our administrators, though most of them are very much better than the laws they make. The credit must go to those schoolmasters who, in spite of little recognition and still less active encouragement, have gone a long way beyond the letter of their bond.

Since many of these men — and of course I include women — are inarticulate and do the right thing without making any fuss about it, and sometimes without even knowing why they do it, I will try to show just how the thing comes about.

A man is appointed to teach a subject and he finds himself confronted with a form of boys. It will not be likely that all the members of his form have a particular urge to imbibe the learning of which the master is so full. Even among those who do want to learn, he will find that many entertain this desire for totally wrong reasons. If he finds one or two who love learning for its own sake, he will be singularly fortunate. I am not being cynical if I suggest that, with more experience, he may come to regard even these exceptional boys with a certain degree of suspicion. The master will perhaps remember the line in Milton, 'The hungry sheep look up and are not fed,' and wonder why the particular breed of sheep he is called upon to feed seem to him to have been born with so little appetite.

This may seem to be rather depressing. Really it is nothing of the sort. The boy is a healthy young creature : he has a great deal of curiosity, but his energy (which means, you know, capacity for work) has not yet begun to flow along intellectual lines. He would, of course, like to be able to talk and to read French, for example, but when he finds that in order to do so, he must learn heaps of irregular verbs, he comes to the conclusion that it will be better to wait till he can go and stay in France himself and so make sure of picking up a correct accent.

If then, the young master of whom we are thinking, allows himself to be unduly influenced by his first experiences with a form, he is likely to be in for a bad time. If he cannot make a quick recovery from his early shocks, he may have mistaken his vocation, and in that case he must find something else to do. A bad schoolmaster does real harm, and it is quite possible for a good scholar to be a bad schoolmaster. It is of little avail to be interested in a subject, he must be interested in *boys*, most of whom will have no particular aptitude for learning.

That avenue is temporarily closed — it may be partially opened again in the sixth form, but boys are not born in the sixth form and some may never reach it. In the meantime, what is going to happen? The answer is easy — unless the man has made

a mistake in his choice of a calling, he finds that it is boys themselves who are going to be his great interest. One avenue is partially closed, but another and much more exciting one lies fully open to his view. The master is not going to teach Latin, he is going to help boys to become men. He is going to take a prominent part in the development of body, soul and spirit. A noble work—can anything be better? But it is essentially a religious task. For how in the world can body, soul and spirit be trained except by an ever-widening service of God?

Well, if I have not proved my proposition—that education is just that—I have made it seem highly probable, as the boy said in answer to the question, ‘Did you prove that proposition in the Geometry paper?’

I would not have it supposed that I imagine myself to have disposed of all the difficulties. Many of these will be dealt with more fully in this course of lectures, but for the moment this must suffice. I am going to assume therefore that all subjects are branches of Theology and that the schoolmaster must, willy nilly, be a Theologian. If this is so, how very important it is that he should be as good a theologian as possible.

Here we may turn aside to meet an obvious objection. If all subjects are Theological, why have any *special* study of Theology? It is like this—and I am indebted to a Roman Catholic writer for the analogy—a knowledge of God is as necessary for true living as is the act of breathing for the life of the body. I may eat—and breathe; sleep—and breathe; walk, run, row, play cricket—and breathe. In fact I cannot do anything *without* breathing. But it may well be that I shall breathe all the better and consequently walk, run, row, eat, think and speak better if I take some breathing exercises. The analogy is not exact, but it does set us on the right line. It is not exact because the Divinity is much *more* than a mere breathing exercise. It is, or should be, the integrating period, the time when all our knowledge and all our experience is brought together and given its proper place in one integrated whole.

Now for this Divinity period it so happens that the best possible text-book is the Bible. There are many reasons for this supremacy, and some of them will be dealt with as we go on with our course, but I have not hesitated to call these lectures

'Biblical Studies' because I am sure that this is the right way of approach to this most difficult and important — most difficult *because* most important — of all studies.

Rather more than four hundred years ago the great work of translating the Scriptures into English, begun by William Tyndale, was completed by his friend and follower, Coverdale. We all owe an incalculable debt to William Tyndale, for it is on his foundation that the noble structure of the Authorised Version was built. It seemed to these translators—and indeed to all English-speaking people at the time and to many since—that by thus rendering the ancient Hebrew and Greek into English, they could inaugurate the great times foretold by Jeremiah when he said :

'I will put my law in their inward parts and in their hearts will I write it, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more, every man his neighbour and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them.'

The result has not been quite what was intended by the Sixteenth Century Reformers. They imagined that they were substituting an infallible book for an infallible Church—a doubtful gain in any case—but it now seems that we are not to have an infallible guide of any sort. No one to-day believes in the infallibility of the book, and no one outside a totalitarian Church believes in an infallible society either—so where are we? Are we really making our pilgrim's way to the Celestial City, or are we still floundering in the Slough of Despond? Wherever we are, we certainly are not treading the path on which the Reformers thought to have set our feet.

We have, indeed, the *words* of these ancient writers, and they are woven together into the finest form ever devised by the inspired wit of man—but what do the words *mean*? No one who reads the Authorised Version intelligently can fail to ask this question. The strange thing is that it was not asked more persistently long before the age of literary criticism set in. There is always a time lag in such matters, and for a very long time those who noticed the many difficulties and contradictions of the Bible were driven away from the society of God's people as impious atheists who dared to cast doubt on the very words of God.

The impiety was really on the other side, but it has taken a long time for the fact to be realised. In the meantime many — far too many — have ceased to read this wonderful book. Either they think it is too difficult to understand, or when understood it turns out to be largely untrue.

If this course of lectures does anything to help such people and to lead them back to the Scriptures, it will not have altogether failed in its object. Let us be frank about it — the Bible is a difficult book, and those who wish to find its meaning must be prepared to wrestle all night like Jacob that they may see God's face and live.

For, though they take much finding out, the words of life are in this book, as in no other. A rich reward awaits anyone who will honestly search the Scriptures. No book has ever undergone such a searching, and it will be one of our main tasks to pass on the results of 400 years of patient scholarship devoted solely to the meaning of the Bible.

The present position is most unsatisfactory, and is totally different from that in any other subject. All subjects have progressed and are still progressing, and we are able to trust the Universities to send forth a continual stream of men and women to carry the achieved results of first-class investigation to the ends of the earth. Here too there is an inevitable time lag, but there is no obvious break in the chain. What is to-day discovered in the Universities will be taught to-morrow in the schools and will be known by everybody the day after. But with Biblical studies, it is not so. The chain is broken at the beginning and all depending on it for support have been dropped in the mud of ignorance and suspicion and unhealthy doubt. To rescue them before it is too late and to restore the missing links in the chain will be the task of this generation. We are here to do what little we can to assist you in this reconstruction.

A part of the gap is indeed pure ignorance. Ignorance can be cured by an increase of knowledge, and what else is a University used for but to foster the growth of knowledge and to encourage its wide dissemination. At present the scholars know a great deal about the Scriptures — I had almost said they know somewhat more than they usually tell (and that has been true of some) — but the average man, if such a person exists, knows

hardly anything at all. Yet this knowledge is of vital concern to him, the average man—or shall I now say the Oxford Undergraduate?—it is not, like a knowledge of the works of an internal combustion engine, a matter that can safely be left to those whose business it may be to make and repair such detestable things. The Bible contains the words of life, and no one can neglect *this* study without the direst consequences to himself and to others. Sometimes I exaggerate purposely. Sometimes I do it without meaning to. But I do not think there is any exaggeration here. Here is the most important study of all, and most people are quite unaware of the advances made in it for, say, the last fifty years. The most fantastic notions are abroad: I am not quite sure that quite a lot of ordinary folk do not still think that to be an orthodox Christian it is necessary to believe in a six-day creation. Some certainly think that much depends on the size of a whale's throat, and very few know that the Nebuchadnezzar of Daniel is Antiochus IV of Syria.

How many know anything about the immense range of Apocalyptic Literature and its bearings on the books of the New Testament? or of Midrash, or the Mystery Religions? of Q, or of Testimonies?

If it be urged that these things and a host of others don't matter very much, my reply would be 'perhaps, but only those who do know have any right to an opinion.' My own conviction is that the results of modern criticism of the Bible are enormously important, and that until they are well known and, in their broader aspects, accepted and acted upon, we can never get a true view of the Evangel—the Good News of Jesus Christ himself.

It is quite true that there has been a great advance all along the line since the days of Harnack and the Liberal Protestant Movement, but it is a profound mistake to suppose that, because we are ready now for further advances, the work of the pioneers can be treated as though it did not exist.

Moreover, however far we wander from it, back to the Bible we must come. In schools it will always be the text-book. In after life, it should always be the guide. The worst of it is that now—now, just when we think we are beginning to understand what it is all about, people are ceasing to read it. When it was

supposed to be infallible it was read, but not understood ; to-day it is no longer regarded as infallible and it is almost entirely unread. If we are not to throw away one of the most beautiful and useful of our heritages from the past, this great book must come back again into the forefront of our literature. But it must be treated intelligently. It has taken many years of patient work on the part of many scholars in different lands to elucidate its meaning. It is obviously impossible for any hard working man, be he schoolmaster or not, to follow in detail all the intricacies of more than a century. Much of it can be short-circuited. Short-circuiting is always a dangerous process. It sometimes causes explosions. We shall have to do a great deal of short-circuiting in the course of these lectures, and quite frankly I expect a few explosions. In fact I shall be rather disappointed if there aren't any.

Let me safeguard myself at the beginning by saying that I do not expect anyone to believe anything that I may say. My object is to stimulate thought in others, not to hand out ready-made results. One thing only I ask my hearers to believe of me—that I am trying to tell them the truth. I know that I shall often be wrong, but Bibles are cheap and I beg you all to check your references and so imitate the Jews of Beroea who, you will remember, were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so.

Examining the Scriptures to see whether these things are so ; we shall have a great deal of this examination to do. Our object is to find the secret of good living, and this secret is to be found in the pages of the Bible. We are called on in this life to think and to act, to do and to dare, and to suffer—perhaps above all to suffer. We shall not necessarily confine our investigations to this one Book ; indeed we shall have need to call to our aid the sages and poets of all ages and races. Most certainly the Greek philosophers and poets will often be our companions and guides, but we shall return again and again to this Book.

The Bible is great Literature, and it is in a sense great History too ; better perhaps to say a great History source book, and some have seen a danger here. They fear lest if it be studied as Literature or as History its unique qualities as a revelation of

God's nature and his purpose with the world will be forgotten in the lower quest.

This is a fear I do not share. Let it be studied as Literature or as History, and its unique value must shine forth. It cannot be hidden. It is impossible to study a book as Literature or as History without trying to probe its inner meaning, and that is precisely the object of our search.

But some will say — Has not criticism entirely exploded the whole story of Revelation as a Myth? The only answer to such an objection is, 'Come and see.' Even, however, if it were so — which I do not believe myself for a moment — Myths have their value, a value that all students of Plato know to be enormous. Perhaps it is true that some of the most important things in our lives can only be expressed in Myths. It is certainly true that there is a mythical element in the Bible — it would be astonishing if it were not so. Total absence of Myth would be a weakness, not a strength in a book from which we are to extract the very Elixir of Life.

Destruction? Well, yes, there has been a good deal of destruction, but what is it that has been destroyed? Once more — come and see. All great reforms involve the destruction of much that has had its day and ought to cease to be. Saint Paul destroyed the sanctity of Jewish Law, and by so doing set free the Spirit of Jesus — the spirit of adoption whereby we, the gentiles, cry, 'Abba, Father.'

The Rabbis, jealous for the Law as a good thing in its way and in its time, did not love St. Paul. No one *does* like being driven out of positions that have been occupied for centuries in comfort and security. Abraham was prepared to sacrifice Isaac — the one sure hope he had of the fulfilment of all his hopes — and we too must be prepared to sacrifice all our cherished beliefs, if by doing so we can come nearer to Truth — which means nearer to God. Indeed Christian Theologians have not been having a very good time. The first shot was fired by Copernicus — that indeed was a big shell and it landed right in the middle of the Mediaeval Fortress. It was followed at intervals by others, until at the end of the last century and right on into this one there has been a mighty bombardment, shells coming from all sides — Science, Philosophy, Psychology, Biology, Archaeo-

logy, History, have all provided ammunition. The Theologians have gone to earth—they retreated to their cellars hoping that something somewhere might be saved to provide a covering for their battered heads. All to no purpose. The fortress of Mediaeval Theology has been smashed into ruins beyond repair, and the Spirit—the Immortal Spirit of Christ—has escaped, flown away. Can it be recaptured? It can be, it must be; without it the people perish. Its recapture is our task, and yours.

I would fain end there for this first talk, but you will want to know something of what is in store for you if you continue with this course to the end.

Some of you may have heard of an Italian University—one of the first to be founded in late mediaeval times—in which the management was entirely in the hands of the students themselves. A grand time that for students. There was only one disadvantage. The students had to defray the entire cost of the course of instruction provided for them. Since they paid the piper, they were entitled to call the tune—and they did. These are among the rules they made:

- (1) Lectures shall begin punctually—any lecturer coming a minute late will be fined.
- (2) Lectures shall end punctually—fines for exceeding the time-limit.
- (3) Lecturers shall be fined for failing to get through the syllabus assigned by the University.
- (4) Fines for avoiding any knotty point.
- (5) If a lecturer wishes to get married he may have one day off for this purpose—but no leave of absence for a honeymoon.

It might have been at this University that the Professor of Philosophy, lecturing on Descartes, observing carefully the rule about punctual ending, finished up one lecture with *Cogito* and began the next a week later with *Ergo Sum*. That was perhaps too rigid an adherence to the letter of the law, but these five are good rules and I propose to keep them.

I am particularly pleased with rule IV, that one about the knotty points. There has been a good deal too much shirking the issue in Theology, and I very much want you to keep me up to the mark. Among other thorny questions, we shall be dealing in due course with most of the problems suggested by the diabolic ingenuity of the growing mind. Always my object will be constructive—the recovery of this fleeting Spirit—an experience which should end in good news.

ON THE PROSPECTS OF RELIGION IN ENGLAND

INTRODUCTION.

The hope of earth awakens with the Spring,
And all the creatures bark or shout or sing.
Allow me then this little song or bark,
Newly awakened from the Winter dark.

* * * *

Upon the map the county where I live
Is strewn with holy names which serve to give
A Christian colour to the countryside,
With saints so many scattered far and wide.
But, Christian reader, do not be misled,
These, if they ever lived, are long since dead.
They came to kill the heathendom they found,
And some was killed, and some went underground.
Then later many others tried again,
And hundreds of their chapels still remain.
So we have part-time Christians, old and new;
But full-time Christians are surprising few.

* * * *

I find the page in *Whitaker* and read,
And rub my eyes — for this is news indeed —
That of the nation sixty-nine per cent.
To count as 'Church of England' are content.
If that is so, then let me near and far
Ask in the name of wonder where they are.
I do not see them in their place on Sunday!
There's nothing to distinguish them on Monday.

* * * *

And yet I know I must without delay
Hasten to qualify the words I say.
The efforts of the past have had result
Beyond the formal limits of the Cult.

Bacillus Christianus has affected
 The human species where 'tis unsuspected.
 And some innoculated all too soon
 From further influence seem to be immune.

THE INHERITANCE.

A parish church, a parson to command,
 Serves every happy acre in the land.
 'A privilege not highly prized,' you say—
 But try to take the holy man away,
 And every person who can hold a pen
 Will sign petitions to the Bishop then.

* * * *

The ringing bells to English ears are dear
 (Unless indeed the listener lives too near);
 And those who hear the summons and obey
 And come to Church to learn to praise and pray
 Expect to find for due assistance there
 The Bible and the Book of Common Prayer—
 An expectation, my informant says,
 Not now so certain as in former days.

* * * *

Sometimes an Archaist will try his hand :
 Without his people's trust, he writes on sand.
 That won, without complaining they will take
 Much elevated teaching for his sake.
 He gone, his laboured doctrines disappear
 Within one circle of the Christian year.
 Whatever be the English Churchman's hope
 It's certainly not centred in the Pope.

* * * *

How many a time returning through the rain,
 On Sunday night, along a country lane,
 I meet the farmer in his Sunday best,
 Faithful observer of the day of rest,
 And sturdy member of the Chapel Choir,
 Where he can worship God without the Squire,

Enjoy the rousing hymn, the lengthy prayer,
 The flowery sermon — in a building bare.
 The presence of his family and friends
 For any other drawback makes amends.
 When all is said, the main effect is cheer,
 For true Religion has a footing here.
 One great advantage he is quick to claim :
 It is suggested by the very name —
 His Church is ' Free.' ' In what sense *free*?' I ask,
 ' To gain true Freedom is no easy task.
 ' Some men are free to turn their priest away,
 ' Some priests are free in spite of all to stay :
 ' But mutual freedom is a mercy rare
 ' The final crown of common sense and prayer.'

* * * *

A priest of honoured name began the strife
 Not long ago for *Liberty and Life*,
 And in the Church Assembly lives to see
 The harbinger of *Life and Liberty*.
 But morning star is not the rising sun :
 'Tis summer time — the day has but begun.
 The Church Assembly rests upon the poll
 Of persons found on the electoral roll.
 Then let me look at *Whitaker* again :
 A simple calculation makes it plain
 That of the millions labelled C. of E.
 Not one in seven has taken steps to be
 A qualified elector. Thus until
 A better organ of the public will
 Develops, it were better not to yield
 To such a fraction-part too great a field.
 Democracy cannot be held to be a
 Complete success within Lao dicea.

MODERN SOLVENTS.

Upon a jutting rock I take my stand
 And watch the tide of time devour the land.

From recent storms these rushing waves must be
 A strong solution of modernity.
 The acid eats away what once were kept
 As strong foundations. What will now be left?

* * * *

‘To see is to believe’ we used to say;
 But Science takes that confidence away.
 Things are not what they seem, and we receive
 But what our senses take — and so believe.
 Our eyes perceive that trees are made of wood;
 That is their substance — well, so far, so good.
 But what is wood? The microscope reveals
 The countless living cells. Yet life conceals
 Its nature still, and when that life again
 Is spent, a mass of molecules remain.
 The Chemist shows that all of these consist
 Of atoms, various sorts of which exist.
 Each atom when examined proves to be
 A spot of emptiness, where one, two, three,
 Or more, electrons in their orbits range:
 Both mite and movement being passing strange.
 If now we ask the Scientists again
What’s the electron made of? They explain
 The question’s futile: we should rather ask
How it behaves, and so transfer the task
 To Mathematics and the appropriate set
 Of suitable equations. We can get
 No nearer to the stuff of things than that —
 A verdict hardly to be wondered at.

* * * *

Assume the *substance* of the Self unknown,
 Its chief activities may still be shown.
 And high among them is the natural urge
 To find the real truth, beyond the verge
 Of wishful thinking. So we search the past
 To see what really happened: but at last

Perceive that persons and events become
 Enveloped in a mist of myth : and some,
 Distorted in the telling, take a form
 Bizarre as rain-clouds in a thunder storm.
 A humdrum fact is readily received :
 A miracle requires — to be believed —
 A weight of evidence. And yet to be
 Too sceptical reduces History
 To levelled dreams of unreality.

AND NOW.

Indifference was the major foe of late,
 Joined with the downward pull and fleshy weight
 Of Animal Nature. But a new attack
 Is launched, to bring barbaric ages back.
 For Toleration, long since hardly won,
 Afresh a bloody battle has begun.
 A graven image called the Nazi State
 Set up in Europe — brazen, monstrous great —
 Must now be worshipped at the pain of death.
 Norwegians, Danes, Dutch, Belgians, hold their breath,
 And smitten France, awaking in amaze
 As from a nightmare dream, averts her gaze.

* * * *

Who holds the line against this massed attack?
 Whom can we count to keep the invaders back?
 Most plain to view, heroic in intent,
 Fanatic bands, with antique armament,
 In isolated posts defend the field,
 Firmly determined not one inch to yield,
 Either in conflict with the unknown foe,
 Or in a compromise with friends they know;
 While others stand within their private forts
 Preserving vested interests of all sorts.
 But the Main Body, people of goodwill
 And common-sense, are unawakened still.
 Oh for a siren and a mighty blast,
 Before the final hour of grace is past,

To sound the alarm through Britain's breadth and length
 And bid Religion rally all its strength—
 'Co-operate,' the pass-word of the day,
 With fads and frenzies all clean cut away!

* * * *

Make no more effort to define—but think :
 Each child of man must either rise or sink,
 And there is THAT that draws him on to GOOD,
 Ever beyond, but, rightly understood,
 Also within—an Influence and a Power,
 Felt from the earliest to the latest hour,
 And constantly assisting his escape
 From over-close connexion with the ape.
 Let Aspiration then for all it's worth
 Link on with THAT to which it owes its birth;
 And thus transformed to Worship let it be
 An intimation of Eternity.

* * * *

Of Worship there exists an ancient school,
 Which to ignore, a man must be a fool.
 Its doctrine, system, rites may be revised
 But not, in reason, utterly despised.
 Examine then without delay the three
 Departments of the Church Activity :
 Belief, and Morals, and the ordered Plan
 Of Prayer and Worship drawn for Every Man.
 Observe proportion : first attention pay
 To Fundamentals. Till a later day
 Postpone the detailed study of the rest;
 For rapid view a bird's eye view is best.

THE CREED.

Six major points are mentioned in the Creed;
 On these the mass of Christians are agreed.
 The first—belief in God, the One, Alone,
 In Three revealed, in Three to man made known!
 First Source, All Sovereign Lord, Creative Might,

Whose was the primal word 'Let there be light.'
 The mysteries of Creation sound His praise—
 Most High, the Great I AM, Ancient of Days.
 And nearly now two thousand years ago
 A life was lived—the time and place we know—
 Wherein the WORD was uttered and expressed,
 The True Eternal Light made manifest.
 We call him *Christus Victor*, Saviour, Lord,
 For ever to be followed and adored.
 When those few years of earthly life were past
 Men slowly came to realise at last
 Both WHO it was, and that His Spirit still
 Inspires, moves, hallows, quickens, as He will.
 Theologians thus enumerate the THIRD,
 Proceeding from the Father and the WORD.
 And so the doctrine of the Trinity
 But sums essential facts of History.
 Beware presumptuous efforts to define
 Or find a formula for the Divine.

* * * *

The Three remaining points are quickly stated,
 To the three first inherently related.
 Monopoly of grace can no man claim,
 In every man the Spirit is the same.
 By fellowship, in fellowship alone,
 The fullness of the Spirit may be known.
 To have it we must share it with another,
 The Spirit meets us through and in our brother.
 So the fourth item in the Christian creed—
 The Church itself—is an essential need.
 The fifth the same—for who could live without
 Forgiveness? God in mercy folds about
 His healing wings our souls; as bodies feel
 The kindly force of Nature quickly heal.
 The sixth and last is a corollary
 Drawn from the nature of the Deity,
 Whose love cannot have lit the human spark
 To have it quenched so soon in utter dark.

MORALS.

The Morals of the Church are simply those
Which an instructed Conscience must impose.
Conscience itself is the enlightened Mind
Demanding what is true and just and kind.
One only Rule, and that the Golden Rule,
Is paramount within the Christian School :
A Principle embodied for all time
By Christ our Saviour in a life sublime,
A living pattern, plain for us to see,
That will suffice us to eternity.

WORSHIP.

In Worship we are given a model prayer,
Received and used by Christians everywhere :
And a Great Book, where he who runs may read
What God has been of old to men in need :
While central in the Church's rite is set
A Celebration—lest we should forget
That life involves us in unending fight
Against the Evil, in, or out of, sight—
Wherein we make His own Memorial
Of Him who won through suffering for us all,
To His Great Offering add our tiny mite,
And cleanse the finite in the Infinite.

* * * *

Now, patient reader, if as far as this
You've found my exhortation not amiss,
Let me entreat you not to leave it thus,
But from henceforth throw in your lot with us.
Choose one or other of the Christian bands,
Whose leaders now must join each other's hands.
You, re-inforcing, tell them so, and say
' Rally, and re-unite, and win the day.'

JOSEPHUS CORNUBIENSIS.

BOOK REVIEWS

ROBERT RAIKES AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
MOVEMENT *

Robert Raikes, of Gloucester, printer, publisher, journalist, founded the Sunday School movement in his native town in the year 1780; and the success of his endeavour was enormous. Thirty years later, in 1810, he was visited by Joseph Lancaster, the educational reformer.

'Raikes led him to the place in a back street where the first school was held. "Pause here," said the old man. Then, uncovering his head and closing his eyes, he stood for a moment in silent prayer. Then turning towards his friend, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, he said: "This is the spot on which I stood when I saw the destitution of the children and the desecration of the Sabbath by the inhabitants of the city. As I asked 'Can nothing be done?' a voice answered 'Try.' I did try, and see what God has wrought. I can never pass by the spot where the word 'try' came so powerfully into my mind without lifting up my hands and heart to Heaven in gratitude to God for having put such a great thought into my heart"' (p. 61).

This fits in harmoniously with our pre-conceptions, yet in some respects Robert Raikes was not quite the sort of man we should expect to find him. In many ways he was an ordinary British citizen of the middle class—very devoted to his business, rising early, going to bed late, and even, we suspect, tempted to visit his office on Sunday. He was foppish in his dress, somewhat flamboyant in his manners, and inclined to at least occasional self-advertisement. On the other hand, he was deeply religious, fundamentally sincere, and above all a warm-hearted lover of his fellow human beings, particularly the suffering and sinful. He was a good churchman, and made regular use of the Cathedral Services in days when according to our mis-informed ecclesiastical historians nobody was supposed to attend them. He was a Tory in politics and married one socially above him.

Fanny Burney, when Mistress of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, visited the Raikes family in Gloucester on behalf of her royal mistress, who had read with interest of the initiation of the Sunday School movement.

Madame d'Arblay has left on record her impressions:

'Miss Planta had a previous slight acquaintance with Mr. Raikes: and to his house, therefore, we drove.

'Mr. Raikes was the original founder of the Sunday-schools—an institution so admirable, so fraught, I hope, with future good and mercy to generations yet unborn, that I saw almost with reverence the man who had first suggested it.

'He lives at Gloucester with his wife and a large family. They all received us with open arms. I was quite amazed, but soon found some of the pages had been with them already, and announced our design:

* *Robert Raikes*, a critical study by Guy Kendall, M.A. (Nicholson and Watson Ltd. 1939. 3/6.)

and as we followed the pages, perhaps they concluded we also were messengers, or avant-courières, of what else might be expected.

'Mr. Raikes is not a man that, without a previous disposition towards approbation, I should greatly have admired. He is somewhat too flourishing, somewhat too forward, somewhat too voluble: but he is worthy, benevolent, good-natured, and good-hearted, and therefore the overflowing of successful spirits and delighted vanity must meet with some allowance . . . Mr. Raikes is a very principal man in all these benevolent institutions: and while I poured forth my satisfaction in them very copiously and warmly, he hinted a question whether I could name them to the Queen. "Beyond doubt," I answered, "for these were the things which most interested her Majesty's humanity." The joy with which he heard this was nothing short of rapture' (p. 14, f).

The first Sunday School was opened in Sooty Alley. Its main purpose, as there was then no system of national education, was to teach the children of the poorest classes to read, in order that they might read their Bibles as an accompaniment to being taught to pray and to observe religious and moral practices. Good women, possessed of the elements of education, were paid to undertake this instruction during certain hours on Sunday. Strict order was maintained and even corporal punishment administered in bad cases. Thus the primitive English Sunday School was a very different affair from that of a century later when it was not necessary to teach children to read, nor to pay competent Sunday School teachers to do it. But, besides teaching the children to read the Bible and to sing hymns and to say prayers, it was felt to be very important to teach them right behaviour and good manners — and in the latter sphere, especially, the daughters of Mr. Raikes played their part.

Mr. Raikes, in his newspaper, the *Gloucester Journal*, which existed, not simply to purvey news and enrich its owner, but also to promote social reform and philanthropic endeavour, gave wide advertisement to the new-born Sunday School Movement. The *Journal* circulated widely, and as a consequence large numbers of Sunday Schools sprang up rapidly, especially in the West of England. Had Mr. Raikes not possessed an influential organ in the press and used it effectively to promote his design, his Movement, notwithstanding its great practical value, would have extended slowly, or perhaps not at all. He had the great satisfaction, before his death, of seeing the travail of his soul and being satisfied.

The account of his funeral harmonizes finely and touchingly with his ideals and methods:

'Some of his scholars — the girls wearing white bonnets with black strings — waited in the Crypt Alley for the funeral procession, which they preceded to the church. They sang parts of Psalms xvi, xc, and another Psalm:

"O satisfy us early with Thy mercy:
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;
And establish Thou the work of our hand upon us."

The charm of the young voices and the beauty and applicability of the words must have been most touching. It was all in accordance with instructions which he had left. Nor had he forgotten the "little rewards." Each child was to receive a shilling and a plum cake.

'He was buried in the Church of St. Mary de Crypt, at the east end of the south aisle' (p. 156).

His memorial tablet is inscribed with a text from *Job* xxix, 11, 12, 13:

'When the ear heard me, then it blessed me: and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.'

His friends and admirers desired to have him commemorated in Gloucester Cathedral. Mr. Kendall relates sardonically the fate of these well-meant endeavours. A stained glass window was duly executed in Munich glass but

'when it arrived it was found that all the suitable vacant windows in the Cathedral had been apportioned. The window at length found its way into the School of Art.'

'Similarly the Earl of Shaftesbury (presumably on the occasion of the centenary in 1880) "with the tremulous pathos of tears, unveiled the model of a statue of Robert Raikes. The philanthropist, with a Bible under his arm, was kindly leading a little child in the right way." But the work was not carried out. It was found that a statue of a man in a wig and knee-breeches would not be in harmony with the Gothic design of the Cathedral' (p. 158).

Mr. Kendall's life of Robert Raikes is extremely well done. It provides its readers with an adequate background, sound critical judgments in which acumen and modernity blend happily. It is a valuable volume for public libraries and a useful contribution to our literature on English education.

H.D.A.M.

PERCY DEARMER *

One of the most striking characteristics of the late Percy Dearmer was his versatility. Evidence of this comes incidentally into the recent memoir by his wife,* and is provided by its bibliography, including, as it does, works like the famous *Parson's Handbook* on the one hand, and a Russian Reader and a standard work on faith-healing on the other.

Many think of Dearmer as chiefly a liturgiologist, and undoubtedly in matters of English public worship his contribution has been unrivalled. His purpose here was to render the results of scholarly research accessible to the ordinary parson whose primary function, after all, is to conduct religious services. Mrs. Dearmer does not tell us whether the phrase 'The English Use' originated with her husband. It was certainly popularized by

* *The Life of Percy Dearmer*, by Nan Dearmer. (Cape. 10/6. 1940.)

him, but behind the lucid phrases of the *Handbook* there are not only years of investigation and experience, but also a depth of learning which the footnotes of the later editions reveal.

Part of Dearmer's work in the sphere of public worship was his outstanding improvement of English hymnody. Mrs. Dearmer tells how *The English Hymnal* and, later, *Songs of Praise* came to be. Both were, in different ways, revolutionary, and therefore have met with opposition, not always of a notably intelligent kind.

The Dean of St. Paul's in his Introduction to the Life refers to the underestimation by many of Dearmer as a theologian, adding :

'People expect a theologian to bore them, and when one arises who is easy to read and easy to understand they decide that he cannot be a real theologian.'

Dearmer's ability as a theologian and historian is illustrated, one would say, by *The Legend of Hell*, *The Truth about Fasting*, and his second Essex Hall Lecture.

While he was known to many through the written word, he was known to many more through the spoken word. His monthly broadcasts with the 'crew' on Sunday afternoons in 1934 are still well remembered. The clarity of his thought and expression and his intellectual honesty would account for his effectiveness as a practical religious educationist and also for the popularity of the five volumes of *Lessons on the Way*.

But with all his many-sidedness Dearmer is shewn in this Memoir as pre-eminently an artist. This is apparent at every turn. He did not merely try to enlist art in the service of religion : he saw art as an essential concomitant of vital Christianity. It was as an undergraduate at Oxford that he first became influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites and by Morris in particular. Like the latter, he saw that the development of art necessitated serious changes in the realms of politics and economics. During his first assistant curacy he was the London secretary of the Christian Social Union and an active member of the Fabian Society.

One of the qualities noticed, apparently, by all who met Dearmer, as also by those who have heard him preach or have read his books, was his originality. This, of course, made his ideas unpalatable to those who expected from a clergyman ready-made answers to stock questions. Mrs. Dearmer quotes some of the *obiter dicta* in his sermons at the Abbey, e.g.,

'Christianity is like radium — seldom found in pure form.'

In this Biography one feels that the only depressing pages are those which tell of the attitude taken up towards him by the Church of England in general and by a certain section of it in particular. For he was constantly misunderstood (as the clearest thinkers are apt to be), or often, when understood, deliberately ignored. After he had left the Vicarage at Primrose

Hill and served with the Y.M.C.A. at the front in the last war, it was King's College, London—not the Church—that gave him a sphere of work. During his best years, when he was simply Professor of Ecclesiastical Art in King's College, he redeemed the time by greatly enriching the Church for which he had so much love. It was, to quote from Mrs. Dearmer's concluding sentences,

'a love that enabled him to remain in the Church, working for it with enthusiasm during the long years (fifteen of the most active years of his life) when he was ignored and neglected.'

It was a mistake that he was never made a dean—an office which would have given great scope for the practical exercise of his liturgical and aesthetic gifts. A canonry of Westminster—offered characteristically after his prime was passed—was a tardy recognition of his services. It is, however, gratifying to note that to-day there are at least two cathedrals where many of the ceremonial principles for which he stood are being worked out to the greater beauty and effectiveness of their services.

Much of the opposition which Dearmer encountered came from some of the less liberal representatives of the Anglo-Catholic school. One of the root causes of this was doubtless his essentially democratic outlook in worship. But another cause was undoubtedly the publication of *The Truth about Fasting*. The storm of vituperation which this aroused in 1928 was only surpassed in 1936 by a painfully uncharitable obituary notice appearing in the official organ of exclusive Anglo-Catholicism.

Many will appreciate Mrs. Dearmer's reference to the change in her husband's attitude to the Eucharist. She first quotes a close friend of his, the Master of the Temple :

'The Eucharist meant for him the gathering of neighbours in a friendly meal, filled with the sense of Jesus present. . . . He cared intensely that such a meal should be surrounded by . . . beautiful . . . colour . . . music . . . ceremony ; but it was not as a *substitute* but as a *focus*. This led . . . to . . . the *Parson's Handbook*—a handbook to the hallowing of the true Socialism.

In his last years . . . he largely lost his belief in the existing fellowship of the Church. Our primary concern was to restore unity and love to Christ's people.'

Mrs. Dearmer adds that

'lack of charity on the part of many regular communicants had much to do with his attitude.'

In this pleasantly written memoir Percy Dearmer is rightly shewn as one who has left for those who come after an inspiring memorial, and as one who, in joyful serenity, nobly served his generation by a passion for Christian unity and by the constant pursuit of Beauty, Truth and Goodness.

EUSTACE BROMWICH.

WHAT IS HINDUISM?*

For those who desire an interpretation of Hinduism as seen from within by a liberal Hindu, this little book is cordially to be recommended. It may be that some of the more orthodox Hindus will not endorse all that Mr. Sharma says; and it may be that some Christian critics of Hinduism will protest that his interpretation of Hinduism is unduly favourable. But it certainly represents the Hindu position as it is held to-day by many of its adherents, who on the one hand value their ancient Hindu tradition, and on the other hand believe that it can be harmonized with all that is best in modern liberal thought.

Mr. Sharma begins with an interesting exposition of his own general view of life, which underlies his interpretation of Hinduism. In this the main points are as follows:

1. The reality of God and God's action.

'God is our eternal quest. And it is God Himself that prompts the quest. For without His creative activity in our hearts, we would never think of seeking Him. Religion is, therefore, essentially supernatural. It comes from above, and not from below. No purely human effort can ever establish a religion' (p. 1).

'Religion is the response of the whole being of man to the call of God' (p. 6).

It is clear from this that Principal Sharma does not hold a pantheistic view of God or religion, nor does he accept any view of religion which would reduce it to the level of a subjective activity of the human mind. A Christian will cordially endorse his statement that 'God is both transcendent and immanent. He is in the world, and also beyond it' (p. 106).

2. Mr. Sharma's second fundamental principle is that all religions, including Hinduism, are only *relatively* true, as expressions of God:

'Just as no language is perfect as a re-echo of man's thought, so no religion is perfect as the re-echo of man's experience of God. . . . It is a mistake to suppose that one's own religion alone is a perfect revelation of God, and that all other religions are the mere creations of priests; just as it would be a mistake to think that one's own mother tongue is a perfect means of expression, and that all other languages are mere meaningless sounds' (p. 2).

3. While insisting upon the consequent duty of reverence and sympathy towards other religions, Mr. Sharma deprecates the idea that by putting together all that is good in the existing religions we could produce the perfect religion, by the method of Syncretism.

'Such an attempt would only result in an eclectic artificial religion, without any life in it. We cannot have a living and growing universal religion, any more than a living and growing universal language. It is only an individual historical religion, or an individual historical lan-

* *What is Hinduism?* By D. S. Sharma, M.A. (G. S. Press, Madras. 1940.)

guage, that can become widely popular, spread itself over many lands, and thus assume something of a universal character' (pp. 3, 4).

4. Mr. Sharma has some clear and wise remarks to make about the relation between the external and internal elements of religion, and the value (as well as the danger) of religious ritual and organization :

'Just as, after a poet has sung his songs and established a language, the grammarian comes and deduces rules of correct usage, so, after prophets have revealed the nature and purposes of God, churches and priests come into existence to organize religion' (p. 5).

Or again :

'If religion should be compared to the human body, its ritualism would be the feet, its morality the hands, its worship the heart and its philosophy the head. The legs of course are the lowest members of the body, but without them it cannot stand. Similarly without ritualism no religion can stand. Thus ritualism has some vital functions assigned to it in religion. . . . The Hindu attitude to ritualism is midway between the Protestant and Catholic attitude. The Hindu view is that all men need ritual, but in varying degree and varying kinds, until the end which the ritual is designed to secure is gained. And when the end is gained, there is no longer any need for the means' (pp. 25 and 31).

With a great deal of Mr. Sharma's exposition of Hinduism, a large number of Liberal Christians will find themselves in substantial agreement. There are, however, one or two points at which there is certainly a deep cleavage between the Hindu and the Christian outlook. No Christian will be satisfied with the impersonal conception of God which Mr. Sharma sets forth as the highest (p. 103). No Christian, again, is likely to be satisfied with the definition of sin which Mr. Sharma gives (pp 63 ff.). For, where the conception of God is predominantly impersonal, the Christian conception of sin as a breach of personal friendship is not realized. Few Christians, again, will be able to agree with Mr. Sharma in accepting the doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls and their re-incarnation in this world in other forms (p. 116).

But all sympathetic students, whether Christians or not, will welcome Mr. Sharma's book as a useful contribution to mutual understanding between the religions. Its spirit is admirable, and its method of exposition is clear and concise.

Mr. Sharma's concluding summary of 'the Soul of Hinduism' lays stress on the following points :

(1) That our ultimate authority in religion is neither a miraculous revelation nor individual reason, . . . but the spiritual experience of a host of seers, which every man can make his own by undergoing the necessary discipline.

(2) That as there is a Law of Causation in the physical world, so there is a Law of Consequences, called the Law of *Karma*, in the moral world.

(3) That there is a way called *Yoga* which leads men to the ineffable perfection of God.

(4) That God is one, though men give Him many names and forms according to their spiritual needs and different degrees of understanding, and that therefore the widest possible toleration is imperative in matters of religious beliefs and practices.

(5) That the trend of human history and the evolution of life in this world should be regarded as different aspects of one spiritual purpose running through all creation, *viz.* the whole universe returning to God who is its home.

Mr. Sharma brings his study of Hinduism to a close by quoting the advice of Mahatma Gandhi that religion should not be separated from politics, but should give to politics its true method and ultimate ideal. In the words of Mahatmaji :

‘For me there is no politics without religion—the universal religion of toleration. . . . All morality is summed up in non-violence, and all religion in Truth.’

No greater message (says Mr. Sharma) could be delivered to us. It is a message not only for India, but also for the world. E. C. DEWICK.

CATASTROPHIC CHRISTIANITY AND REAL CHRISTIANITY*

Mr. Channing Pearce's book consists of a number of studies in 'catastrophic' Christianity, to use the term which he frequently employs. Many of them have appeared in various religious journals. The unity underlying the theme is not easy to define: indeed, definition and orderly presentation will not be expected in a writer who owes so much to men like Kierkegaard and Barth, and who sees illustrations of the need of re-casting the creed of Christianity in catastrophic terms in writers so fundamentally dissimilar as Barth and D. H. Lawrence—to refer to but two of the writers studied. It is a unity of mental climate: so that all 'rebels' may be taken as contributors to the central theme.

The title of the book is derived from the apocalyptic vision of *Ezekiel* i, 22:

‘And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal.’ ‘The conception of the celestial firmament “as the colour of the terrible crystal,” a crystalline purity as of white fire or ice in which all conflicting or component elements are fused and therefore terrible to look upon, seems—to typify this conception of Christianity as of a new life reborn from “dread and trembling,” disaster and death, which is characteristic of the thought of such as Kierkegaard and Karl Barth—the religion of a terrible and intense candour of spirit wrought to a diamond-like induration and brilliance by a poignant inner experience of catastrophe.’

Mr. Channing Pearce is to be congratulated on the endeavour to place theology in what he calls 'the unaccustomed and vagabond company of life

* *The Terrible Crystal: Studies in Kierkegaard and Modern Christianity*, by M. Channing-Pearce. (Kegan Paul, 1940. 7/6.)

and letters'; nor will any thoughtful person deny his plea 'that a wide experience of life may be of more avail than a meticulous and specialized scholarship.' The real question raised, however, has not to do with mental climate, which varies with the succession of epochs, nor with the nature of an author's qualifications for his task: it is this conception of 'catastrophic Christianity,' this—as the writer terms it—'re-relation of religion to reality,' this quest of an 'existential' faith. In other words, he who would rightly discuss a book should give attention, not to *psychological* issues, but to the issue of *truth*.

What, then, is this 'catastrophic Christianity' in which the author believes? This 'type of thought about religion for which crisis and catastrophe are the very stuff of religious reality'? This 'thinking conceived in, interknit with and orientated towards catastrophe'? What is the precise nature of the 'conviction'—which alone, the author holds, can avert the ruin of the world—'the conviction that both reality and religion are alike fundamentally catastrophic'? The author seems to me to leave the answers to these fundamental questions in dubiety. Perhaps it is that the reviewer belongs to the class—to whom Mr. Channing-Pearce gives a warning in advance that he does not write for them—which has 'no need of such physic as these pages may contain.' But, if that be so, this emphasis on 'the transcendental'—which is held to be of the essence of 'catastrophic Christianity'—is hoist with its own petard: for, in that case, it becomes nullified by the relativities and subjectivities of a psychological approach. A truth is true *for all*, or not at all. Neither prophet nor theologian limits his message to those to whom it is held to be congenial; indeed, those to whom it is not congenial are generally regarded by the prophet and thinker as those who need their message most. The preacher preaches to the unconverted; the philosopher writes for those who do not see what he sees. Prophet and thinker cannot acquiesce in the finality of separate groups of contending standards of action and belief. The nerve of their thinking would be cut in such a case.

And what is this 'existential' thinking about which so much is written in certain quarters? If it is thinking in which the whole personality of a man is engaged, then it is, as it seems to me, but an unnecessarily technical way of speaking of *real* thinking. It is but a new and confusing name for a very old thing. Most people of intelligence know the difference between thinking that is directed and controlled by moral purpose and thinking that is the pastime of the self-centred intellect. The latter, however, should not be termed 'theoretical,' 'abstract,' 'academic'—and these adjectives are frequently applied by 'catastrophic' writers to the thinking that is the opposite of 'existential' thinking. For a good deal of this so-called 'existential' thinking lacks the poise, the balance, the *justesse*, the lucidity, the sanity, which belongs to thinking at its best: and a good deal of 'abstract' and

'theoretical' thinking is morally inspired and morally controlled. Thinking is not necessarily good thinking because it indulges in caricatures, or dizzies the mind by a frenzied spinning of paradoxes.

Mr. Chaning-Pearce has written from his heart in a tense situation. He is one of many who rebel against 'the sterile unreality of dons and parsons.' There is, however, a sterile unreality of heady rhetoric: and against this, constructive thinking must be on its guard as much as against the former, and perhaps more common, variety. I share the author's conviction that faith is a passion. But it requires, as I cannot but feel, a closer integration with the irreducible and stubborn facts of history than is evident in 'catastrophic' thinking. It involves the love of truth, as truth, and not as of succour or as sporadic in the present distress; the pursuit of righteousness, as righteousness, and not as of rebellion to a past heritage which contains both good and bad. Christian thinkers must keep their heads. If 'catastrophe' means an overthrowing it is not unrelated to the past or to the present. It is not a *miraculum*. It is as much in an orderly scheme of things as the innumerable peaceful surrenders to unrighteousness and falsehood which are the real causes of 'catastrophe.' The Church's concern is not with 'catastrophe': it is with 'the things that cannot be shaken.'

C. J. WRIGHT.

THE SOUL'S AWAKENING*

Archbishop Frederick Temple's well-known dictum is to-day being fulfilled in many ways:

'Our theology has been cast in a scholastic mode, *i.e.* all based on logic. We are in need of, and we are being gradually forced into, a theology based on psychology. The transition, I fear, will not be without much pain: but nothing can prevent it.'

Mr. Merton in his *Sons of the King* introduces his readers to a Gospel of Life. In form it rests neither on Christian dogma nor on Christian history, although it is suffused by the Christian spirit; its basis is psychological, not dogmatic nor historical, as the Christian theologian understands these things.

The Swiss professor, Amiel, wrote in the nineteenth century, still a much greater age than the twentieth:

'The removal of Christianity from the historic to the psychological realm is the great need of our time.'

Mr. Merton shares this conviction. We ourselves, in the service of the Christian religion, wish, however, to make the best use of both history and psychology and would like to keep them walking hand-in-hand. But Christian history and Christian dogma become at times so tyrannical and exacting that we can well understand men of Christian spirit deserting them altogether for the more attractive society of Christian psychology. Mr. Merton's Gospel may perhaps be described as a Gospel of psychological positivism, and to

* *Sons of the King*, by Reginald Merton. (Andrew Dakers Ltd. 6/-, 1940.)

some it will seem to be more Pelagian than Catholic, more Buddhist than Christian. But whether it will really be so for him who accepts it will depend upon the spirit in which he lives it. He may live it so as to become a super-egoist or a Christian altruist. Mr. Merton has much to say about the detrimental character of 'denials':

'Our denials, as we have seen over and over again, are not our own. They are something alien to us, which the inertia of life has allowed us to accumulate, which through our unconsciousness have grown closely round us, choking the spirit in us, depriving us of the power to understand life, gradually quenching the light that is our very own, since it belongs to our inner selves, darkening the knowledge of our own completeness' (p. 242).

Our denials are proofs, not of our greatness, but of our limitations. This is a truth which ought to be realized by all those who are dominantly critical and sceptical in their attitude towards life. The spirit that denies is a meaner spirit than the spirit which affirms. Yet we may easily go wrong here, for we must distinguish between denials which are superficial and denials which are fundamental. Superficial denials evince the spirit of negativeness, but profound denials may evince the spirit of positiveness. The dictum, *Omnis negatio est affirmatio*, can be demonstrated to be true logically. But it also can be proved to be true psychologically. It is the spirit in which we deny that will determine the quality of our denial, whether it is negative or positive.

We are not sure that Mr. Merton has sufficiently realized this in his condemnation of denial and his conviction that denial is the necessary proof of limitation on the part of him who makes it.

A young man remarked to the reviewer that 'It is so much easier for those who are not philosophers to make the affirmations demanded by theologians.'

There is danger lest Mr. Merton's psychological Gospel may degenerate into an Oriental mysticism in which all active service of our fellows is neglected because deemed to be of small importance compared with our own spiritual development. Such a Gospel is not the Christian Gospel but the Gospel of Buddhism. We are not asserting that the Gospel of Buddhism is not a real Gospel. It is: and it stands far higher than various materialistic Gospels, but it is lower than the Christian Gospel. And yet the positive element in the Gospel of Buddhism does constitute a part of the Gospel of Christ. But its place, we believe, is secondary, not primary, in that Gospel. 'What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' is not as central in the Christian Gospel as 'Whosoever seeketh to save his life shall lose it.'

Not the cultivation of spiritual experience for the sake of that experience, but service to God and to our neighbour which if rightly practised brings that experience, is, we believe, the Christian doctrine of salvation.

H.D.A.M.

PRE-REFORMATION ENGLAND*

The aim of Dr. Maynard Smith's *Pre-Reformation England* is to describe the condition of the Church of England on the eve of the Reformation, and to explain how many were the causes of the changes that were coming, apart from the divorce of Henry VIII. The first part is concerned with the Church and its abuses; with the clergy and their repute; with the popular religion and how it was superstitious; and with the social and political changes, due to the Renaissance, the rise of the middle classes and the prevalent spirit of nationalism. Part II traces the tendencies towards reform. There are chapters on Lollardy and its survivals; on Scholasticism, its triumph and decline; on the English mystics and the wide influence of their works; on the vernacular literature and the slow formation of a public opinion which was independent of the Church; and on Humanism with its contempt for the immediate past; while the last chapter deals with the impetus given by the Catholic Reformers to a Reformation such as they did not desire.

So summarized, this work might give the impression of being yet another text-book, for whose existence no plea of necessity might be alleged. Canon Maynard Smith is, however, neither a pedagogue nor a professional historian, but a man of letters, and writes in a lucid and attractive style. He disclaims originality, by which he seems to mean that he has not had recourse to MS. sources, but for the period there are ample printed documents, though the writer does not always refer to the latest works. *Pre-Reformation England* is an expensive work, but contains a great deal of information which would take time to collect from other works. There are many writings on the Reformation and the earlier Middle Ages, but the later Middle Ages, though a period of architectural and liturgical splendour, have tended to be neglected because the scholastic movement failed to progress. Medieval and modern historians have abandoned it to each other. There is consequently room for a work such as this, which surveys England at the opening of the century, and, while affording a convenient summary for the undergraduate, is not written in a fashion to repel the general reader.

Canon Maynard thus states the problem, which historians have left unresolved:

'Never did the Church appear more powerful than when Henry VII died. The *Ecclesia Anglicana* — I use the words in their medieval significance as denoting the clerical estate — was dominant in the land. It was part of an international body; it had sanctions and support outside the country; it had within privileges and immunities recognized by law and consecrated by custom. Its leading bishops were the counsellors of the king, whose civil service was largely staffed by ecclesiastics. The Church was enormously wealthy; it owned at least a fifth part of the

* *Pre-Reformation England*, by H. Maynard Smith, D.D., Canon of Gloucester. (Macmillan. 1938. 25/-.)

land of England; its buildings were treasure houses, and every art was the handmaid of religion. Its services were necessary on all important occasions in life—at christenings, marriages and funerals. Its courts alone decided all matrimonial cases, and ratified or did not ratify all wills. Its courts, too, took cognisance of all transgressions of the moral law—the fornicator and the village scold might alike be summoned for punishment. The clergy almost entirely controlled education and hospitals, besides administering all charitable funds. Merchant guilds and craft guilds had their chapels and their chaplains, and the parish churches were the centres of social life. Priests abounded; and the bells were always jangling in the steeples, calling men to prayer and devotion. The holy days of the Church were the holidays of the people, and those who wished for adventure and a change of air went on pilgrimages; while those who loved dramatic shows were satisfied with miracle plays and moralities. In fact the Church was everywhere apparent and everywhere dominant. She seemed to have captured the world and to be capable of controlling it. Yet when she was attacked she showed no power of organized resistance. She was bereft of her privileges and despoiled almost without a struggle. Is it true to say that the Church had become so identified with the national life that she had no separate existence? Is it true to say that she was so corrupt that only the purging fires of the Reformation could save her? Where did her weakness lie, or if she was not weak, how did it come about that the nation acquiesced in changes it had never desired? ' (pp. 11, 12).

At the close of his book Canon Maynard Smith attempts to summarize the causes of these religious changes. The Papacy had lost the spiritual leadership of Christendom and declined into an Italian principality. The English bishops were the nominees and servants of the king, and anti-clericalism was common in the larger towns, largely because of the exactions of the clergy. Religion was popular but superstitious, and the superstition assisted the Reformers in their attacks. Christendom as an ideal was dead, and an international church was an anomaly in a period of nascent nationalism. The king was the focus of English patriotism, and loyalty to the Pope might be represented to be a form of treason. The contemplative life was going out of fashion, but the monasteries retained their great possessions, which excited the greed of nobles and merchants. The rise of a commercial middle class found the ecclesiastical rules about usury and the just price irksome, and tended to revert to the Jewish view that worldly prosperity was the mark of divine favour. Asceticism was going out of favour, and home life was coming to be exalted. Above all, the discovery of a New World and the re-discovery of an Old Civilisation were unsettling men's minds. The printing press spread new ideas, and the young lacked reverence for what had satisfied their fathers.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter in the book is on the influence of the English mystics. To the unmystical nothing is drearier than their meditations, which neither inform nor amuse. Few are now readers of mystical treatises, and perhaps those of a mystical bent now dabble in the occult.

'The great mystics belonged to the XIV century; but their works were never more popular than on the eve of the Reformation. They provided the spiritual food on which devout people of the early XVI century were nourished, and we cannot understand the period aright unless we take them into account. There are more MSS. of Richard Rolle extant than those of any other English medieval writer' (p. 339).

The mystics were all of them orthodox, though sometimes their works were interpolated by Lollards. They wrote on the spiritual life and personal religion, and relied upon intuition rather than on reason. They attacked nobody, but unconsciously they prepared the way for the Reformation. They had little to say about institutional religion, the sacraments and corporate worship; and so their readers were apt to become indifferent to a Church with sacerdotal claims.

The intellectual confusion of the age assisted change.

'Among the more educated the New Learning was raising new questions and creating doubts. Historical enquiries into the Donation of Constantine, the Isidorean decretals, and the authenticity of the works of Dionysius the Areopagite—textual criticism of the Scriptures and the Fathers—the restoration of classical Latin and contempt for the Latin of the schoolmen, and above all the knowledge of Greek, were bewildering the minds of men. The New Learning in England was not, as in Italy, pagan; but it was all the more disturbing because it was religious. Theologians, instead of welcoming the new knowledge as Aquinas had welcomed the discovery of Aristotle, were obscurantists. They were proud to dub themselves Trojans, and assault those whom they called Greeks, with the result that many advocates of the New Learning became apostles of a Protestant revolution; and at any rate when the Reformation came, the ranks of churchmen were hopelessly disordered' (p. 519).

Canon Maynard Smith promises another volume covering the period from Henry VIII's divorce to the death of Elizabeth if the present work meets with approval.

P. R. SMYTHE.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

A LAY VIEW OF THE MODERN CHURCHMAN'S TASK.

SIR,

Please allow a layman into whose hands has fallen the October number of the *Modern Churchman* to pay his humble tribute to its attitude. A layman who, properly nurtured in the Christian faith, has given up regular church-going, partly due to an inability to align what is there said and sung with to-day's teaching of science and history. In the hope of being helpful I here beg to express my viewpoint.

The kernel of the Christian religion should rest in the Communion Service. The attitude it should induce is to be at one with all things created, not seeing nature as predatory in character, but as bound together by common sacrifice to which the Cross of Christ gives undying expression. Such a spirit is the pre-requisite to the fulfilment of God's Holy Will.

The newcomer to the Holy Communion Service would scarce be able to discern this purpose, nor would he even be able to guess the circumstances of the Last Supper, which the service commemorates. It is as if the service were conducted in a foreign language, each sentence having to be construed by its initiates to divine its purport.

Because the Church Services do not speak in the idiom of the day, the Christian religion is becoming esoteric and a source of satisfaction to an elect few. To the extent that the Bible is still an open and accredited book, we remain Christian in the tradition of our fathers, as often as not shelving the philosophical difficulties implicit in scientific discovery. Having no outlet for corporate expression, the Christian seed may lie inert and choked with tares.

Re-statement is necessary for revival. The miraculous elements, which Church Services now seem to emphasize and which are not essential to true religion, require to be purged.

Eschewing idolatry, let us see in Jesus the pre-eminent manifestation of God in man. Not focussing on the degree of His divinity and His suffering, but rather on the Spirit which enabled Him as a man to transcend it in the pursuit of God's Will, remembering that even He, in the extreme of bodily suffering, felt His faith forsake Him. Rejecting sacerdotal accretions which centre about the Cross as a once and for all propitiatory act, let us recognize in the life of Jesus the way of salvation for those who strive in the way. He is the vine and we are the branches to be judged by our fruits. There may be other plants in God's garden.

It is not only irrelevant but harmful to true religion to encourage an acceptance of the factual happenings of the Gospels beyond a man's natural credulity. This is a matter to be left to individual judgment, bearing in mind that while obviously possessed of amazing powers, legend was also bound to collect about such a stupendous personality as Jesus. While informed biblical criticism will assist the judgment, few are good enough to pursue theological or philosophical controversy, which does not directly encourage the spirit to pursue God's Will.

The supreme miracle is that of the Resurrection. This does not depend on the startling inability of any contemporary to come forward with bodily remains to confute the claim of Christ's disciples, but lies in the fact that Christ is living in our midst to-day with greater effect than during that initial period nearly two thousand years ago when He laboured unrecognized. The Christian faith is not open to be shattered by any antiquarian discovery, although its outward observance may be open to alteration. The Christian faith is unique among religions in that the life of Jesus, the man, is unique.

What of personal survival? We know that life can be classified as of the spirit or of the flesh, but we cannot know how one can exist without the other. We know that there are undying virtues like courage, love and truth, which make us kin. If there is no light there is darkness, and we cannot conceive of one without the other. Life is dynamic, and we

cannot to-day conceive of the cessation of struggle by conjuring up the static conception of heaven and hell, reward and punishment. Life does not treat us all alike, nor can we conceive of such a condition. Individual freedom of action is not incompatible with a universe of general law. If we have accomplished anything worthy, that will not be lost; equally, alas, anything unworthy. Appreciating our insignificance, can we ask more? In time of trouble we may quail and take refuge in outworn creeds, but is it the duty of religion to encourage this cowardice with an esoteric teaching, a teaching which will appeal to a minority but which will be regarded as unhealthy by most?

The Church should concentrate on the essential teaching of Jesus and His living of it, and in this find the answer as to whether to appeal to the select or to all conditions of men. The appeal must be in truth and can never then achieve a cheap popularity, for the fact remains that, while many may appreciate the goodness of the seed, there will be few to receive it and bring forth one hundredfold.

With my lack of orthodox conviction, many would dispute my title to call myself Christian or to find membership in a Christian Church. Certainly there are few of the thirty-nine articles to which I can subscribe and, even allowing for the necessity of poetical utterance in place of scientific exactitude, the amendments required to the form of Church Services, particularly the Holy Communion, appear to me as very extensive. The literary beauty of the services makes the task of revision more difficult, and those who accept and love our ancient and familiar form would be unlikely to countenance a blue-pencilled version. The controversy aroused by the very mild Prayer Book revision of a few years back is evidence of that. Moreover, it seems that the forces of reaction are exploiting these troubled times, encouraging superstition and credulity in the recall to religion.

I feel there must be many with an outlook similar to my own. Now is the time to evolve a completely modern Prayer Book. War conditions give opportunities for services for all sorts and conditions of men who seldom enter a church and to whom the present services but vaguely appeal. While the modernised service would not be acceptable to regular church-goers, it might appeal to the outcasts.

May I suggest that the *Modern Churchman* should undertake the task?

SQUADRON-LEADER, R.A.F.

[For nearly thirty years past we have been trying to help laymen of the type of our correspondent and to induce the Church Authorities to make provision for them in our Church Services and teaching. Something has already been done: far more remains to be accomplished. Various attempts have been made by us to secure Prayer Book revision on modern lines, and we hope that modernist churchmen will not rest content until they have issued a Prayer Book providing a full set of Church Services such as our correspondent desiderates.

The difficulty of doing this worthily is great indeed, owing to the extraordinarily high literary quality of our Book of Common Prayer, and the no less difficult task of expressing accurately modern religious ideals and spiritual and temporal needs in truthful and inspiring devotional language.—ED., M.C.]

THE FACTS OF EASTER.

SIR,

Thank you very much for the space given to my letter on St. Paul's use of the word $\omega\phi\theta\eta$ in *I Cor.* xv, 5, *f.* and for your answering remarks. I think, however, the grounds that you give for the assumption that the N.T. usage of the word denotes a visional appearance are insufficient. The reason for its greater use in this connotation in the N.T. is simply due to the nature of the subject-matter. That is to say, the appearances related in the N.T. are almost entirely of a visionary nature; in point of fact, excluding the appearances of the risen Lord, acts of appearance of material bodies in which $\omega\phi\theta\eta$ or any other aorist passive form of the verb could be used amount in all to two, *Mt.* xiii, 26, and *Acts* vii, 26, and in the second case $\omega\phi\theta\eta$ is used.

In the somewhat earlier Hellenistic Greek of LXX there is no trace of the use of $\omega\phi\theta\eta$ being confined to non-material appearances, but again the nature of the subject-matter brings it about that in the majority of cases it is used with regard to such.

A rather convincing point against the fact that N.T. writers understood a visionary appearance by $\omega\phi\theta\eta$ arises from its use in Luke's Gospel xxiv, 34, where he uses it with reference to the risen Lord. If he had meant a purely visionary appearance, he would hardly have represented the Lord as saying a few verses later (xxiv, 39), 'handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have.'

D. MAIN.

Cuddesdon College, Oxford.

October 27th, 1940.

MR. HARDWICK AND SPINOZA.

SIR,

May I ask you to correct a misprint in my letter in your last number. In the sixth line from the bottom of p. 287 the word 'accept' should read 'except.'

The article by the Rev. J. C. Hardwick on Indifferentism and Pessimism has some bearing on the point I wished to make clear. 'Who wants to be free?' he asks, and cites Mahomet, Calvin and Marx as men who derived their enthusiasm from their 'predestinarianism,' from their belief in themselves as 'chosen instruments' in the working out of a 'predestined plan.' Such a belief, however, is wholly unreasonable, and indeed immoral, unless we are prepared to concede that our adversaries are also 'instruments' chosen to oppose us. The belief in oneself, or one's church, or nation, as a chosen instrument of God, with its corollary that one's enemies are in consequence the enemies of God, is to my view the most damnable and destructive belief that can be fished out of the dustbin of decaying superstition.

That such a belief is rampant in churches and nations at the present time is not to be denied. Nor is it to be denied that it is the cause of most of our troubles, both ecclesiastical and political. It is not a spirit of indifferentism but of unreasoning partisanship that lies at the root of our present miseries.

Mr. Hardwick says that we need a 'new manual of personal re-education like Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* . . .' Well, I have found one; and since Mr. Hardwick is anxious to resign his 'freedom' he could hardly fail to approve it. It is Spinoza's *Short Treatise on God, Man and his Well-being*.

The School House, Brayton, Selby.

October 19th, 1940.

E. V. MILNER.